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PATENTIN THE CLAIMS

1 (original) Apparatus comprising:

an upper plate assembly comprising a main portion, a first extension member and a second extension member, said extension members extending from said main portion at an angle;

a lower plate assembly connected to said upper plate assembly;

a first side plate and a second side plate, said side plates connected to said lower plate assembly, each said side plate comprising a top and a bottom; and

an engaging assembly attached to said upper plate assembly and said lower plate assembly, engagement of said engaging assembly causes said bottom of said first side plate to move toward said bottom of said second side plate.

2. (currently amended) ~~Apparatus~~ The apparatus in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said upper plate assembly comprises a top and a bottom, said upper plate assembly further comprises a front roller assembly and a back roller assembly, each roller assembly extending from said upper plate assembly bottom.

3. (currently amended) ~~Apparatus~~ The apparatus in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said first side plate is pivotably connected to said lower plate assembly, said first side plate comprising a roller assembly configured to contact and move along said first extension member.

4. (currently amended) ~~Apparatus~~ The apparatus in accordance with Claim 1 further comprising a biasing member connected to said first side plate, said biasing member for biasing said bottom of said first side plate away from said bottom of said second side plate.

5. (currently amended) ~~Apparatus~~ The apparatus in accordance with Claim 4 wherein said biasing member extends between said first side plate and said second side plate.

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6. (currently amended) ~~Apparatus~~ The apparatus in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said lower plate assembly further comprises at least one guide pin and at least one biasing member, said upper plate assembly further comprising at least one guide pin receptacle for at least partially receiving a respective said guide pin, said biasing member biasing said lower plate assembly away from said upper plate assembly.

7. (currently amended) ~~Apparatus~~ The apparatus in accordance with Claim 1 wherein each said side plate comprises a lower roller assembly.

8. (currently amended) ~~Apparatus~~ The apparatus in accordance with Claim 1 further comprising a handle connected to said upper plate assembly.

9. (currently amended) ~~Apparatus~~ The apparatus in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said engaging assembly comprises a lever attached to a connecting member, said lever pivotably attached to said upper plate assembly.

10. (original) A tool for installing slats on a triangular slat holder, said tool comprising:

an upper plate assembly;

a lower plate assembly connected to said upper plate assembly;

a pair of side plates connected to said lower plate assembly; and

an engaging assembly attached to said upper plate assembly and said lower plate assembly, engagement of said engaging assembly causes a bottom of said first side plate to move toward a bottom of said second side plate.

11. (currently amended) ~~A tool~~ The tool in accordance with Claim 10 further comprising at least one roller assembly that extends beyond said lower plate assembly when said engaging assembly is engaged.

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12. (currently amended) ~~A tool~~ The tool in accordance with Claim 10 wherein each said side plate includes at least one roller assembly that extends beyond said side plate.

13. (currently amended) ~~A tool~~ The tool in accordance with Claim 10 wherein said lower plate assembly is biased away from said upper plate assembly with at least one biasing member.

14. (currently amended) ~~A tool~~ The tool in accordance with Claim 10 wherein said side plates are connected to each other with at least one biasing member.

15. (withdrawn) A method for installing slats on a triangular slat holder with a tool, the tool including an upper plate assembly, a lower plate assembly connected to the upper plate assembly, a pair of side plates connected to the lower plate assembly, and an engaging assembly attached to the upper plate assembly and the lower plate assembly, said method comprising:

inserting a slat adjacent the lower plate assembly;

positioning the tool such that each side plate of the tool is adjacent a side of the slat holder and the slat is adjacent a side of the slat holder;

affixing an end of the slat to an end of the slat holder; and

moving the tool along a length of the slat holder to affix a length of the slat to the slat holder.

15. (withdrawn) A method in accordance with Claim 15 wherein affixing an end of the slat to the slat holder includes positioning a pair of slat extension members within a central slot of the slat holder.

17. (withdrawn) A method in accordance with Claim 15 wherein affixing an end of the slat to the slat holder includes engaging the engaging assembly and causing the side plates to contact and apply pressure to the respective adjacent side of the slat holder.

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18. (withdrawn) A method in accordance with Claim 16 wherein affixing an end of the slat to the slat holder includes contacting the slat with at least one wheel which assists with the fixing of the extension members within the central slot.

19. (withdrawn) A method in accordance with Claim 15 further comprising disengaging the tool from the slat holder once the slat has been installed on the slat holder.

20. (withdrawn) A method in accordance with Claim 15 wherein moving the tool along a length of the slat holder comprises rolling the tool along a length of the sides.